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 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
 OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
 21 July 1953

24 July 53

CHRONOLOGY OF RECENT EVENTS IN THE SOVIET ORBIT

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11 July

Hungarian decree, which cut crop delivery quotas for collectives but not for individual peasants, remitted all fines for non-fulfillment of crop delivery targets of individual peasants and collectives, and cancelled last year's arrears in grain deliveries.

12 July

Soviet newspapers reported reception at Embassy Mongolian People's Republic attended by Molotov, Mikoyan, Marshall Zhukov and V. V. Kuznetsov. Presence of Zhukov indicated rumors his arrest unfounded.

13. July

The American Embassy in Moscow reported

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rumors that army officers including

General Sinilov, Chief of the Moscow Garrison, and

General Artemev, Commanding General of the Moscow

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 Military Dis arrest.

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State, DIA reviews
 completed

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13 July US Legation in Budapest, commenting on a 13 July Szabad Nep editorial on Rakosi's speech, stated that the editorial was further confirmation of Hungarian Party's confusion and increased fear of the people that new economic policy mostly double talk.

13 July Report of this date from US Naval Attache Moscow stated

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that a recent change in Soviet military laws will reduce by half the term of service in specialized services, including the navy and air force but not the ground forces, and liberalize draft exemptions for only sons. This report unconfirmed.

14 July Article in Moscow paper regarding a mass meeting of ministry personnel called to denounce Beria revealed the replacement of the Minister of Transport and Heavy Industry, V. A. Malyshev, by I. Nosenko.

14 July Presidium of the Supreme Soviet announced that

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the USSR Supreme Soviet will meet 28 July.

- 14 July V. M. Molotov, Marshal Sokolovsky, Lieut. General Sinilov, Commandant of Moscow, Lieut. General A. Sarayev, Chief of the Soviet Army's Diplomatic department and L. P. Pavlov, recently appointed Ambassador to France attended reception at the French Embassy. The appearance of Sinilov dispelled the recent rumors of his arrest.
- 14 July Hungarian government asked Yugoslavia to agree to the formation of a mixed frontier commission and stated willing to have commission start work at the earliest possible moment.
- 14 July USSR agreed to appointment of Dobrivoje Vidic as Yugoslav ambassador to the USSR.
- 14 July Polish Government acted to improve availability of consumer goods and criticized wholesalers and heads of socialized shops for showing "insufficient care" for the greater satisfaction of the working people.

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14 July USSR concluded a contract for 10,000 tons of Dutch butter, at least eight times as much as it bought from the Netherlands in 1952.

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On 22 June 6,000 tons of Danish butter were purchased. These food purchases from the West show that there has been no change in the government's policy of making increased quantities of consumer goods available to the populace.

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15 July Molotov's letter accepted Israeli Foreign Minister's 6 July proposal to resume Soviet-Israeli diplomatic relations.

15 July Soviet delegate to UN Economic and Social Council

announced to contribute
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\$1,000,000 and lend services of Soviet experts to

UN Technical Assistance program.

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16 July Ukraine Radio announced replacement of Ukrainian MVD Minister Meshik, P. Ya. by Strokach, T. A. Strokach was MVD Minister in Ukraine from 1946 until its amalgamation with MGB April 1953 at which time Meshik appointed Minister.

16 July Pravda reported meeting of Party activ of USSR Ministry of Defense. Bulganin and Zheltov, chief of Political Directorate, spoke plus the following: Zhukov, Admiral Kuznetsov, Sokolovski, Govorov, Budenny, Communication Marshal Presypkin, Artillery General Nedelin and Aviation General Zhigarev.

16 July Two more Russian wives of American citizens received

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exit visas permitting them to leave the Soviet
Union. [REDACTED]

- 16 July USSR-French trade agreement concluded, calling for \$34.0 million annually each way.
- 16 July US Embassy in Athens reported that USSR planned to appoint an ambassador to Greece and has settled some pending visa cases involving Greek nationals in the USSR. Soviet-Greek trade agreement calling for annual exchange of goods worth \$10.0 million each way will be concluded shortly.
- 16 July SED Politburo announced a wage increase in publicly-owned enterprises to become effective on 1 August, with any wage cuts since 1 January 1953 to be restored and higher rates for Sunday work to be paid.
- 16 July East German Justice Minister Fechner replaced by rabid, ruthless Communist Hile Benjamin.
- 16 July East German government issued call for all-German

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West German leaders quickly rejected the bid.

- 17 July USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium announced the appointment of V. A. Malyshev as USSR Minister of newly-created Ministry of Medium Machine Building.
- 17 July Presidium USSR Supreme Soviet appointed A. I. Lavrentiev Ambassador to Iran replacing I. V. Sadchikov.
- 17 July USSR-Danish trade agreement concluded, calling for annual exchange of \$20.0 million worth each way.
- 17 July USSR plan fulfillment announcement for first half of 1953 indicated continued decline in rate of economic expansion.
- 17 July Following Soviet announcement of 15 July, Polish delegate to UN Economic and Social Council offered to contribute \$75,000 to UN Technical Assistance Program.
- 17 July USSR and Austria signed agreement for turning over Ybbs-Persenberg dam to Austrians, under Article 35 of draft state treaty, despite Western warnings

that this would weaken future bargaining position

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on a treaty.

- 17 July Soviet tanks and troops were returning to Berlin in substantial numbers, according to well-founded reports.
- 18 July Soviet High Commissioner Semennov sent a letter to US High Commissioner Conant charging that American planes had been dropping leaflets over Soviet airfields almost daily for the past two weeks. He warned that this could not be tolerated by Soviet authorities.
- 18 July M. D. Bagirov, alternate member of the Presidium, was removed from the Buro of the Azerbaijan Central Committee and from his post as Chairman of the Azerbaijan Council of Ministers on charges of "gross bureaucratism" and violation of the principle of collective leadership.
- 18 July The unofficial Soviet mission in Japan contributed \$10,000 to Japanese flood relief.

- 19 July Soviet press and radio published texts of 30 May

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Soviet note to Turkey and 18 July Turkish reply regarding Soviet withdrawal of claims to Turkish territory bordering Soviet Armenia and Georgia and reconsideration of Straits question.

19 July Communists at Panmunjom stated that the UN Command's assurances on all major points except one were adequate and that they were prepared to discuss preparations for signing the armistice.

19 July Peiping radio's commentary on General Nam Il's statement (above) said that "under heated questioning, the American delegate Harrison was compelled to give the necessary assurances and clarifications to 9 of the 10 questions put by General Nam Il," and warned that "if a policy of connivance of the UN Command towards the South Korean government and forces continues, it is possible that the implementation of the terms of the armistice agreement will continue to be

obstructed, before or after the armistice."

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20 July USSR and Israel publicly announced resumption of Soviet-Israeli diplomatic relations.

14-20 July Soviet propaganda related to the Beria case dominated internal output during the week. The increasing propaganda charges against the US -- that the US controlled Rhee and was trying to prolong the Korean war, that the US instigated and still supports the disaffection in East Germany, and, by implication, that Beria was a US agent -- all appeared to have been tailored to specific situations for which the Kremlin needed an outside scapegoat or a standard explanation. They did not to date appear to affect the over-all conciliatory policy which began after Stalin's death. "Peace by negotiations" was still represented as the goal of Soviet policy.

20 July Soviet note to Turkey warned that the scheduled visits to Istanbul of American and British warships

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and asked for more information on the matter.

20 July USSR agreed to send more than \$57 million worth of food to East Germany, but expected payment in manufactured goods.

21 July South Korean Foreign Minister said his government "may reconsider" its promise not to obstruct an armistice, and asked Washington for "clarification" of General Harrison's assurances to the Communists of South Korean willingness to observe the truce terms. The Communist radio (presumably North Korean) warned that unless the US "takes effective steps" to foil Rhee's "plot" to wreck the armistice, Harrison's assurances "will be nothing but empty talk."

Possibility that Beria was purged before the

German riots.

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[redacted] knew of his purge as early as 15 June. Beria's power may have been challenged weeks before the announcement of his arrest with the postponement of the Georgian Party Congress, called for 25 May. Western observers generally consider that Beria was arrested on 27 June.

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